

OEXA/06C
1 Feb 83

President's Veto of Justice Bill re Drug Czar

The President recently vetoed Enrolled Bill H.R. 3963, the Violent Crime and Drug Enforcement Improvements Act. Section 305 of that Bill was a provision, amending federal criminal statutes, that would have made it a federal crime to perpetrate acts of violence directed at US intelligence personnel engaged in the performance of their official duties. The Presidential veto was dictated, inter alia, by the fact that the Bill also contained a provision--sponsored by Senator Joe Biden of Delaware--which would have created an Office of Director of National and International Drug Operations and Policy, to be headed by a "drug czar", having broad yet ambiguously defined authorities. It was this provision and not the intelligence provision that the President found, with full support of the Attorney General, particularly onerous. Your 11 January 1983 letter to David Stockman (attached) expressed support for Section 305 of the Bill but deferred final judgment to the Department of Justice and other law enforcement agencies as to whether other provisions in the Bill dictated veto.